



Education Report

Page 10

A SPECIAL WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN

The Province's Welcome to Kindergarten pilot program is now in 24 elementary schools – up from three schools last year. Parents and their four- and five-year-olds attend an orientation at their neighbourhood school where they receive a kindergarten welcome bag full of supplies and activities that help them use the summer to prepare for school. [Read more.](#)

Right: Minister Bond admires the work of a preschooler at Kingswood elementary in Richmond.



Message from Minister Shirley Bond

Here we are at the end of another school year – another extremely successful school year.

B.C. students continue to be among the best in the country – and the world.



*Minister Shirley Bond
Minister of Education*

A new national study released last month shows that British Columbia is second only to Alberta among Canadian provinces when it comes to learning.

On our 2004/05 provincial exams, students scored higher than the year before in 10 subjects, including Grade 12 English, math, physics and biology.

At the same time, B.C. maintained its record-high completion rate: 79 per cent. Even more impressive is the increase in the Aboriginal student completion rate. It is now at 48 per cent – up six per cent from 2000/01.

In the past few months, Premier Campbell or I have visited more than 20 school districts all around the province. It is clear from those visits that B.C. students are successful because they work hard, and because teachers, support staff, trustees and parents provide incredible support.

Keep up the good work!

I hope this summer you have the opportunity to relax, rejuvenate, and enjoy quality time with friends and family. Thank you for your efforts, and congratulations on your success.

HOT TOPIC

The B.C. Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) and the B.C. Teachers' Federation (BCTF) are continuing their contract negotiations with the guidance of mediator Irene Holden.

There is a process in place – the same process that has allowed us to reach 123 other public sector agreements. All of these agreements have seen salary increases of between 8 and 14 per cent.

June 30 is still a week away. That is the date for the expiry of both the BCTF's current contract and government's offer of an approximately \$3,700 per teacher signing bonus.

There is hope that the BCPSEA and BCTF can still reach a deal, but it's going to take the kind of commitment that resulted in the K-12 support staff framework agreement. That agreement saw negotiators work around the clock over the May long weekend. It is helpful to remember just how far we have come this year in our negotiations with public sector workers.

Negotiations by the numbers

- 123 – the number of agreements reached to date.
- 255,000 – the number of workers covered by the agreements.
- 83 – the percentage of public sector employees covered by the agreements.
- 8 to 14 – the percentage range of salary increases covered by the agreements.
- 4 – the number of years the agreements cover.
- 56 – the number of agreements reached with school district support staff.
- 20,000 – the number of school district support staff who have reached agreements.

Want more information?

Updated bargaining facts are available at www.negotiatingframework.com



*Emily, Summer of Gold
(Our Canadian Girl)
Written by Julie Lawson*

Reading Corner

It is 1897 and the Klondike Gold Rush is changing everything in Victoria, including life for Emily and her family. This fourth book in the series continues some earlier threads and introduces a dog that Emily finds and then must protect from men desperate for dogs to work in the north. This is historical fiction, for fun, or to complement a social studies lesson. This book is suitable for students in grades 3–6.

